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Every Family Its Own Meal Planner

A broadcast by Miss Ruth Van Deman and Dr. Hazel Stiebeling, Bureau of Home Economics, and Mr. Wallace Kadderly, Office of Information, broadcast Tuesday, June 17, 1941, in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, over stations associated with the NBC Blue Network.

--ooOoo--

WALLACE KADDERLY:

And from Washington,---we continue the Tuesday series on human nutrition---as we follow through another step with some of the recommendations adopted by the National Nutrition Conference held here in Washington last month.

As you know from what you've been reading in the papers and hearing over the radio, one of the most important announcements of the conference was the new yardstick for good nutrition. But it's a pretty scientific yardstick for most of us to understand. It needs a lot of translating into everyday words before most of us can use it. At least I don't know very many people who are on speaking and eating terms with grams of protein ... milligrams of iron ... international units of Vitamin A.

Well, two weeks ago, here on the Farm and Home Hour, Dr. Hazel Stiebeling and Ruth Van Deman told us how to get a daily food guide, based on this nutrition yardstick. And today they've come over again from the Bureau of Home Economics to suggest how it works out in family meal plans ... All set, Ruth?

RUTH VAN DEMAN:

Very comfortably set, thank you, Wallace. Don't you see our elbows resting on the table? ... But I think you're going to need more desk room before we get through. You're going to need a place to figure your weekly market order.

KADDERLY:

My weekly market order?

VAN DEMAN:

Don't look so alarmed, Wallace. If this is a yardstick for good nutrition, it has to measure something definite. Family meal plans and a market order are all tied up together. Isn't that the way you mean to work it, Dr. Stiebeling?

HAZEL K. STIEBELING:

It's the only way I know to work it. ... How many are there in your family, Mr. Kadderly?

KADDERLY:

Two ... just two grown ups ... except of course when we have company.

STIEBELING:

And do you have a garden? Do you raise some of your vegetables or fruit?

KADDERLY:

No ... no, I'm sorry we don't have the space for that. We have to buy all our food at the grocery.

(over)

STIEBELING:

A typical city family of 2 adults ... Moderately active?

KADDERLY:

I'm not sure the Kadderlys are typical moderately active adults. I'm at a desk too much of the time. How about switching this to the John Does or the George Roe family? ...

VAN DEMAN:

All right, Wallace, if you prefer, we'll make this the George Roe family. But you'll help us work out the market order, won't you?

KADDERLY:

Glad to, certainly.

STIEBELING:

Then suppose we say George Roe is a young man doing light work in an airplane factory ... the kind of work that takes more brain than brawn.

VAN DEMAN:

And Mary Roe, his wife, holds up her end on the housework.

KADDERLY:

And out of the weekly wages they're trying to put aside something to buy a house later.

STIEBELING:

Right. So they're trying to keep their food bill down as much as possible and still get the essentials of a good diet.

VAN DEMAN:

About what you called an adequate diet at minimum cost in "Diets to Fit the Family Income"?

STIEBELING:

Just about. That was worked out long before the new yardstick for good nutrition was announced. The new yardstick calls for a slightly better diet than our minimum cost plan suggests. But of course it would take more money to buy the better diet.

VAN DEMAN:

But your minimum cost diet is still a very good working plan where every nickel counts.

STIEBELING:

So far as I know, it's one of the cheapest combinations of foods a family can live on safely for an indefinite period. It calls for a good deal of cereal the more of the cereal that's the whole-grain variety the better, of course.

KADDERLY:

And it calls for a good deal of milk, I suppose.

STIEBELING:

That's right. And, naturally, to hold down the cost, a diet like this has only enough vegetables and fruit, eggs, and lean meat, to supply the vitamins, and minerals, and protein, not furnished by the cereal and milk.

KADDERLY:

You're lumping the bread in with the cereal.

STIEBELING:

Yes, bread is a form of cereal, just as cheese is milk in another form.

VAN DEMAN:

And to add calories, and flavor, and make the meals stick to the ribs, there must be sweets and fats.

STIEBELING:

I was taking them for granted. Our American diets are seldom short in sugar or fat.

KADDERLY:

I remember when you were here with us before, you made it very clear wherein our diet shortcomings lay. You said we're short on milk and green vegetables ...

STIEBELING:

Green and yellow vegetables ... tomatoes ... and the fruits rich in vitamin C.

VAN DEMAN:

Now shall we see how all this works out in the Roe family's market list for a week ... enough for two grown people, no children ... Is your pencil in working order, Wallace?

KADDERLY:

All ready.

STIEBELING:

Put down 9 quarts of milk first.

KADDERLY:

9 quarts of milk.

STIEBELING:

But it doesn't all need to be in fluid milk. There's cottage cheese for instance.

KADDERLY:

Yes, and I have a hunch Mary Roe would use quite a lot of those 9 quarts of milk in cooking.

VAN DEMAN:

Let's take the green and yellow vegetables next.

STIEBELING:

Well, say at least 4 pounds of green and yellow vegetables ... more would be better.

KADDERLY:

Green and yellow vegetables 4 pounds Do you count sweet potatoes as a yellow vegetable?

STIEBELING:

No. We count them with the other potatoes. Make it 9 pounds of potatoes - sweet, or white, or both.

KADDERLY:

9 pounds potatoes. That should allow for potatoes every day.

STIEBELING:

Every day and sometimes twice a day. That's one thing the new yardstick for good nutrition is emphasizing ... the high value of potatoes as food in relation to their cost. And the same is true of dried beans.

VAN DEMAN:

You group the dried peas and beans and peanuts and peanut butter along together, as I remember.

STIEBELING:

Yes, they're all good for vegetable protein, and vitamin B₁, and other things. In this low cost market list for a family of 2 for a week, ... I'd include at least a pound and a quarter of assorted dried beans, peas, soybeans, peanut butter and nuts.

KADDERLY:

Just for short I'm going to say dried beans and peanut butter or some other assortment 1-1/4 pounds.

VAN DEMAN:

Let's get the tomatoes next. I'd like stewed tomatoes to go with the baked beans, and brown bread made with whole wheat flour and molasses ...

KADDERLY:

Slow there, Ruth ... I'm making a market list. I'm not writing menus.

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, but when you keep house you have to figure the two together.

STIEBELING:

We'll make it 3 pounds of tomatoes, or tomatoes and citrus fruit, if oranges or grapefruit are plentiful and cheap enough where the George Roes live.

KADDERLY:

3 pounds tomatoes or tomatoes and citrus fruit. Some of that might be canned.

STIEBELING:

Certainly. And we'll put in a half pound of dried fruit.

KADDERLY:

Mind if I make that prunes ... I think they're the most plentiful of the dried fruits now.

STIEBELING:

Of course that's the way to beat any food budget ... to watch the market for what's plentiful and pick up a bargain wherever it fits into the general scheme.

Then put down 3 or 4 pounds more of other fruits and vegetables ... apples, beets, turnips, onions - whatever is in season.

KADDERLY:

3 or 4 pounds other fruits and vegetables.

STIEBELING:

Next come eggs - at least 1/2 dozen ... and lean meat, poultry, and fish 3-1/2 pounds.

KADDERLY:

Eggs 1/2 dozen ... meat and so on 3-1/2 pounds.

STIEBELING:

Cereals and bread 8 pounds.

KADDERLY:

Cereals - 8 pounds. That means whole grain or vitamin enriched wherever possible.

STIEBELING:

Right. And 2 pounds of fat - which includes salt pork or bacon as well as table fat and cooking fat.

KADDERLY:

Fat - 2 pounds.

STIEBELING:

And 2 pounds of sugar or other sweets.

KADDERLY:

My, if the people in Europe had a pound of fat and a pound of sugar per person a week now, wouldn't they think they were rolling in something.

STIEBELING:

Well, that's all of the list except coffee, or tea, and seasonings.

KADDERLY:

You know what I think I'd do after I made out a week's market list like that, just supposing I were in Mary Roe's place.

VAN DEMAN:

I imagine you'd do a grand job of marketing ... Pick good fresh vegetables and sound fruits ... Buy in bulk when you could ... And not trot to the store every day.

KADDERLY:

I'd try not to. But I was thinking about working these foods into a kind of master meal plan, so you'd know what was coming up for Tuesday breakfast and Thursday dinner, say. Wouldn't it be a sensible idea to sit down with a big piece of paper ruled off in checkerboard fashion -- seven days a week, three meals a day...

VAN DEMAN:

Wallace, I see how your mind's working. You'd like to schedule the week's meals the way you schedule our radio broadcasts in advance.

KADDERLY:

Sure. That's the only way I can be certain we get everything in.

STIEBELING:

That's the very best way to work a diet pattern into meal plans. I have one friend who makes her meal plans for the next week every Saturday night. That morning she went to market and laid in most of the supplies for the coming week ... everything but the green vegetables, and fresh fruit, and meat she has to buy the day it's used. She kept her eyes open for what was in season - abundant and cheap. And she carried along in her mind a general idea of how the foods she was buying would fit together into appetizing meals.

VAN DEMAN:

You worked out a week's set of low-cost menus in your bulletin on "Diets to Fit the Family Income," ... following that same plan.

STIEBELING:

That's right. We offer them just a sample of hundreds of others that might be worked out. Food plans have to be flexible, so they'll fit any place and any season.

And from the standpoint of nutrition, even this low cost plan we've suggested for the Roe family gives a better diet than 75% of the people in the United States are now eating.

KADDERLY:

Dr. Stiebeling, I know that some of our Farm and Home friends are already finding your bulletin "Diets to Fit the Family Income" very useful. But if there are others who haven't and would like a copy, could you send it?

STIEBELING:

That's something you'll have to check with Ruth. She knows about bulletin supplies.

VAN DEMAN:

"Diets to Fit" is O. K. It's on the free list, plenty of copies.

KADDERLY:

Fine, Ruth. That gives us the green light on "Diets to Fit the Family Income" as a bulletin anybody can have free ... by writing to the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

VAN DEMAN:

Absolutely.

KADDERLY:

Then Farm and Home friends, if any of you want a copy of this free bulletin "Diets to Fit the Family Income," just send your name and address to the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

In addition to low-cost diet information such as that Dr. Stiebeling has just worked out here for the George Roe's ... This bulletin has market lists and meal plans for diets at moderate cost; and diets for those who have plenty of money to spend for food. It also suggests a diet at very low cost.

In short, it contains just everything you would like to have to help in making up market lists and planning meals ... so as to get the most for your food money ... and a maximum of food values.

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